

Bark Canoes among the Jakuns and Dyaks.

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(See Plate I, fig. 2).

As no one seems to have noticed the use of bark canoes in Malaya, the following note may be of interest :

In July, 1902, during a trip up the Rumpin River in Pahang, I saw the Jakuns using some roughly made canoes of bark. It was *meranti* bark as well as I can remember. Their use was said to be confined to the Jekáti and Kerátong tributaries of the Ulu Rumpin.

They were but little trouble to make and the Jakuns brought down large cargoes of Rattans and other jungle produce in them. They did not always take the trouble to take them back up stream again, or to repair them when split or damaged.

I did not measure any of these "rapak," as they are called in the Rumpin, but they were 4 or 5 metres long. /5

I sent a specimen to the National Museum in Washington, but it warped very much out of shape when drying.

The bark is removed from the tree in one large sheet. The ends are cut square and stitched up with small rattan.

Ribs are placed transversely about 18 inches apart, and straight sticks are lashed transversely across at corresponding places to hold the sides in position. A large split rattan encloses the edge of the gunwale. The sewn ends are freely cauled with mud or clay. X

^In July 1907, I found similar canoes in use among the Dyaks of the Semundung and Ulu Sempang Rivers, West Borneo. Slightly more roughly made if possible—a thick spongy bark is used containing much resin(?) The same bark is much used as flooring by Malays and Dyaks. The Malays said it was the bark of *bintangor batu* (?)

The Dyaks dispense with the split rattan along the gunwales, as they use a much stronger and thicker bark than the Jakuns. These canoes in no way compare with the elaborate birch bark structures of the North American Amerinds,^s but they are very easily and quickly made. I was told that two Dyaks could make a large canoe in half a day. The Dyaks had no special name for them—they used a term which I can't recall, but it meant only *bark canoe* (according to the Malays).

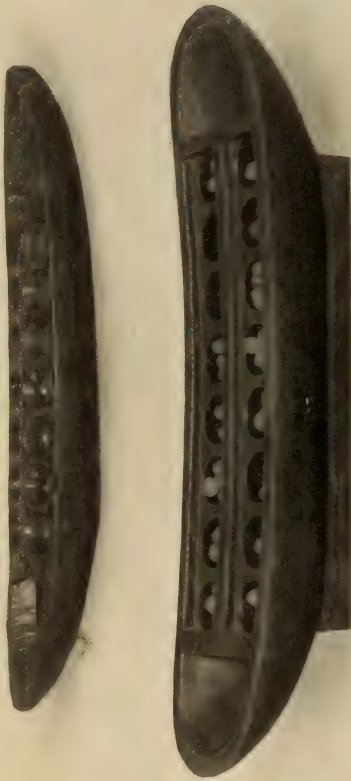


FIG. 1



FIG. 2.